



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

JAN 5 1996

Mr. Robert Joslin, Regional Forester
Southern Region
U.S. Forest Service
1720 Peachtree Road NW, Ste. 951
Atlanta, GA 30367-9102

Dear Mr. Joslin:

In accordance with our responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing NEPA, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6 office in Dallas, Texas has completed its review of the U.S. Forest Services's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for revising the Land and Resource Management Plan for the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas (NFGT). The NFGT consists of the Angelina, Davy Crockett, Sabine, and Sam Houston National Forests in east Texas and the Caddo and Lyndon B. Johnson National Grasslands in north central Texas. There are approximately 637,000 National Forest acres in 12 counties and 38,100 acres of National Grasslands in 3 counties.

In addition to the No Action alternative, the DEIS analyzes the effects of eight action alternatives that propose to address forest plan objectives such as: a balance of natural values with timber production and market commodities; improvement of riparian and wildlife habitat, maintenance and improvement of threatened and endangered species habitat, emphasis on recreation, special areas, and urban forests, etc.

EPA offers the following comments for your consideration in development of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) preferred alternative (Alternative 4b) proposes to emphasize corridors between red cockaded woodpecker (RCW) habitat management areas. We concur with the USFS's determination that Alternative 4b establishes a fair balance in meeting the economic needs of the various forest and grassland users and local counties, while providing for the protection of RCW and other natural values. In addition, this alternative supports the stated objectives of the NFGT Revised Forest Plan.

LO - EPA expresses lack of obj. with the preferred alt.

